

THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

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ECONOMY

Americans begin to get relief

Stimulus checks reach people; March retail sales off by 8.7%, April expected to be worse

By Christopher Rugaber, Paul Wiseman and Kelli Kennedy
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON » Government relief checks began arriving in Americans' bank accounts as the economic damage to the U.S. from the coronavirus piled up Wednesday, and sluggish sales at reopened stores in

Europe and China made it clear that business won't necessarily bounce right back when the crisis eases.

With many factories shut down, American industrial output shriveled in March, registering its biggest decline since the U.S. demobilized in 1946 at the end of World War II. Retail sales fell by an unprecedented 8.7%, with April expected to be

far worse.

The world's biggest economy began issuing one-time payments this week to tens of millions of people as part of its \$2.2 trillion coronavirus relief package, with adults receiving up to \$1,200 each and \$500 per child to help them pay the rent or cover other bills. The checks will be directly deposited into accounts or mailed to households in the coming weeks, depending on how people filed their tax returns.

VIRUS » PAGE 10



A man wearing a protective mask and gloves because of the coronavirus outbreak walks past mannequins in the windows of the Macy's store in the Downtown Crossing area of Boston on Wednesday.

CHARLES KRUPA
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CORONAVIRUS RESPONSE

Air Force Academy grounds graduation pomp



TREVOR COKLEY — U.S. AIR FORCE

U.S. Air Force Academy Class of 2019 graduates toss their hats skyward as the Air Force's Thunderbirds roar overhead during the May 2019 graduation ceremony in Colorado Springs, Colo. This year, the COVID-19 pandemic is forcing a bare-bones commencement with no guests.

Long-awaited celebration pared back amid outbreak; SoCal families disappointed, still proud

By Keith Sharon
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They reserved a spot for Eric's grandfather and bought his plane ticket. This was going to be a great moment for him. Luis Nunez, 81, was set to fly from his home in New York City to see his grandson Eric graduate from the Air Force Academy. Luis, a former Navy man, had always dreamed of being a pilot, but he never got the chance.

The upcoming Air Force graduation was going to be a culmination of hard work and lifelong dreams for three generations of the Nunez family and the families of 975 other senior cadets, or "firsties" as they are called on campus

GRADUATION » PAGE 10



Herb and Christine Loo of Yorba Linda stand in front of their home Friday wearing Air Force Academy shirts along with their coronavirus masks and holding an Air Force Academy banner. Their son, Connor Loo, graduates from the academy Saturday with little fanfare.

MARK RIGHTMIRE
STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

VIRUS OUTBREAK

The race is on in state to roll out blood tests

Two counties team with Stanford, USC to launch reliable means of testing

By Teri Sforza
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As hundreds of Californians die of COVID-19, some officials are working fast to launch blood testing that could bolster public health and help determine when it's safe to resume normal life.

In recent days, Santa Clara County teamed up with researchers at Stanford University to test the blood of thousands of county residents for antibodies to the coronavirus, with a positive test indicating they've already been infected and recovered.

Los Angeles County began a partnership with USC to do the same, rolling out blood tests over the next several weeks for about 1,000 randomly selected people.

And Gov. Gavin Newsom has said he wants to see more blood testing across California, which

TESTS » PAGE 7

COSTA MESA

City chalks up wins against rehab facilities

Court victories might bring shift in homes' operations

By Teri Sforza
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The city of Costa Mesa is racking up victory after victory in a ferocious — and expensive — legal battle with sober living homes.

In orders announced over the last few weeks, a federal judge has tossed three lawsuits charging that Costa Mesa's tough new zoning rules discriminate against the disabled.

Costa Mesa also emerged victorious in a similar battle in state court, bringing its win streak to

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PANDEMIC RELIEF FUND

OC Family to Family Campaign

Help OC families in-need during the COVID-19 crisis.

Make philanthropy a team effort and work with friends and family to help another family in need. By **donating \$500**, your gift will automatically turn into a \$500 emergency debit card and be given to a family who needs help with rent, food, or utilities during the COVID-19 crisis to prevent homelessness.

To donate, text **FAMILY2FAMILY** to 40403

For program details, please visit our website at UnitedWayOC.org/Family

100%
GOES TO HELP
LOCAL FAMILIES

